

Technology and Caregiver Navigation

Key Insights for Aging Network Professionals

With more than 63 million caregivers nationwide, the need for accessible and coordinated navigation support is substantial and growing. This brief synthesizes findings from USAging's environmental scan on caregiver navigation services drawing on qualitative research with technology leaders to highlight how technology is being used and where opportunities and challenges remain for the aging network.

The Role of Technology in Caregiver Navigation

Caregiver navigation is fundamentally a person-centered, non-clinical service that connects caregivers to resources, information, and support tailored to their unique situations. Increasingly, technology is being integrated into this process to improve service delivery reach and efficiency.

Across the aging network, agencies are deploying a range of digital tools, including:

- **Resource databases and aggregators** that centralize information and streamline referrals
- **Assessment platforms and interactive tools** that generate personalized care plans
- **Communication and scheduling tools** to coordinate caregiving activities
- **Peer-to-peer platforms** that foster connection and shared learning
- **Artificial Intelligence (AI)-enabled and ambient technologies** (e.g., chatbots, smart devices) that provide ongoing support with minimal user effort

Technology leaders emphasized that these tools could reduce fragmentation, improve coordination between organizations, and help caregivers navigate complex systems more effectively.

Key Benefits of Technology for Caregivers and Providers

- **Improved Access to Information and Resources.** Technology expands access to caregiving information, enabling caregivers to find relevant resources quickly and at scale. Some platforms use algorithms or AI to recommend tailored content, improving relevance and engagement.
- **Personalization and Tailored Support.** Tools such as quizzes, onboarding workflows, and AI-driven systems allow caregivers to receive customized guidance based on their circumstances. This personalization is critical to maintaining engagement and ensuring caregivers find value quickly.
- **Flexibility and Convenience.** Caregivers often face significant time constraints. Technologies that deliver short-form, on-demand content or asynchronous support align better with their daily realities.
- **Emotional Support and Reduced Isolation.** Peer-to-peer platforms and virtual communities provide both practical advice and emotional connection, helping caregivers feel less isolated.

- **Organizational Efficiency and Data Use.** For agencies, technology can streamline referrals, manage caseloads, and support data collection for reporting and evaluation, though this capability is not yet fully leveraged across the network.

Challenges to Adoption

- **Digital Access and Literacy.** Broadband gaps, especially in rural communities, and varying levels of digital literacy limit access for some to technology-enabled supports.
- **Trust, Privacy, and Misinformation.** Some caregivers express concerns about the reliability of online information, especially information generated by AI-driven tools. Fear of misinformation and data privacy concerns can reduce the caregiver's willingness to engage.
- **Technology Fatigue and Time Constraints.** Caregivers often lack the time or energy to engage with complex or lengthy platforms, risking low adoption of caregiver technology supports.

The Emerging Role of AI

AI is transforming caregiver navigation through personalized resource matching, real-time support via chatbots, and predictive tools that identify caregiver needs early. It can streamline fragmented systems and improve efficiency. However, success depends on trust, accuracy, and combining AI tools with human support to ensure reliable, empathetic, and accessible guidance.

Implications for the Aging Network

Technology is reshaping caregiver navigation, but aging professionals must ensure these tools remain accessible, trusted, and user-friendly- emphasizing simple design, strong outreach, and integration with human support is essential. Investments in outcome evaluation and broader access, particularly for rural and hard-to-reach populations, will be critical to ensure technology-driven solutions effectively meet caregivers' needs and improve system coordination.

"An area agency on aging is by a community and for a community by and large...and we are sharing this intervention or this tool because we know it fits within our community..."

- AAA Staff Member

Conclusion

Technology offers opportunities to expand service delivery and streamline complex systems. However, aging network professionals must balance innovation with trust and usability. Technology that strengthens human-centered approaches will be essential to ensuring caregiver navigation remains accessible and responsive to the growing and evolving needs of family caregivers. Through ongoing conversations with caregiver navigation pilot site grantees, the team is working to understand better the opportunities and risks that technology presents for caregiver support.

Additional Resources

The following resources from the Administration for Community Living can help organizations explore technology solutions that strengthen caregiver navigation and support services:

- The No Wrong Door Resource Center's [The Use of Information Technology and Management Information Systems \(IT/MIS\)](#) highlights lessons learned and examples from statewide No Wrong Door systems, demonstrating how technology is leveraged to improve navigation services and coordination.
- The No Wrong Door Resource Center's [Selecting an IT/MIS Vendor Checklist and Timeline](#) provides key considerations, recommended steps, and sample implementation timelines for organizations acquiring and deploying technology and information management solutions.
- The [National Information and Referral \(I&R\) Support Center](#) offers training, technical assistance, and resources for information and referral professionals, navigation programs, and navigators serving older adults, people with disabilities, and family caregivers.

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